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On Campus with Max Shulman

(Author of "Rally Round the Flag, Boys!" and "Barefoot Boy With Cheek.")

THE INNER MAN

College is fun and frolic and fulfillment—except for one melancholy omission: we don't get to enjoy Mom's home cooking. (In my own undergraduate days, curiously enough, I did not undergo this deprivation; my mother, a noted cross-country runner, was never home long enough to cook a meal until her legs gave out last Arbor Day.)

But most of us arrive at college with fond gastric memories of Mom's nourishing delicacies, and we are inclined now and then to heave great racking sighs as we contemplate the steam tables in the campus cafeteria. Take, for an extreme example, the case of Finster Sigafoos.

Finster, a freshman at one of our great Eastern universities (Oregon State) came to college accustomed to home cooking of a kind and quantity enjoyed by very few. Until entering college, Finster had lived all his life in Europe, where his father was an eminent fugitive from justice. Finster's mother, a natural born cook, was mistress of the haute cuisine of a dozen countries, and Finster grew up living and eating in the Continental manner.

He arose each morning at ten and breakfasted lightly on figs, hot chocolate, and brioche. (It is interesting to note, incidentally, that brioche was named after its inventor, perhaps the greatest of all French bakers, Jean-Claude Brioche (1634–1921). M. Brioche, as we all know, also invented croissants, French toast, and—in a curious departure—the electric razor. Other immortal names in the history of breadstuffs are the German, Otto Pumpernickel (1509–1848) who invented pumpernickel and thus became known to posterity as The Iron Chancellor; the two Americans, William Cullen Raisin (1066–1812) and Walter Rye (1931–1932) who collaborated on the invention of raisin rye; and, of course, Hans Christian Andersen (1805–1875) who invented Danish pastry).

But I digress. Finster, I say, breakfasted lightly at ten a.m. At eleven a.m. his Mom brought him his sixteenses. At twelve she brought him his twelvesses. At 1:30 she served his lunch: first a clear broth; then a fish course (porgy and bass); then an omelette; then the main course—either a saddle of lamb, an eye of sirloin, or a glass of chicken fat; then a salad of escarole; and finally a lemon soufflé.

At three p.m. Mom served Finster low tea, at five p.m. high tea, and at ten p.m. dinner—first a bowl of petite marmite (she trapped the marmites herself); then a fish course (wounded trout); then an omelette of turtle eggs; then the main course—either duck with orange or a basin of farina; then a salad of unborn chicory; and finally a caramel mousse.

And then Finster went off to college, which reminds me of Marlboro Cigarettes.

(Actually it doesn't remind me of Marlboro Cigarettes at all, but the makers of Marlboro pay me to write this column and they are inclined to get surly if I fail to mention their product. Mind you, I don't object to mentioning their product—no, sir, not one bit. Marlboro's flavor is flavorful, the filter filters, the soft pack is soft, the Flip-Top box flips, and the tattoo is optional. Marlboros are available wherever cigarettes are sold in all fifty states of the Union. Next time you're in the U.S.A., try a pack.)

But I digress. We were speaking of Finster Sigafoos who went from Continental dining to dormitory feeding. So whenever you feel sorry for yourself, think of Finster, for it always lifts the heart to know somebody is worse off than you are.

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We, the makers of Marlboro, can't say whether European food beats ours, but this we believe: America's cigarettes lead the whole world. And this we further believe: among America's cigarettes, Marlboros are the finest.

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